



# The Searchlight

To Members of the  
The Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies, Inc.



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## An Interview with Dr. Jim Tucker

by David P. Stang, MTS, JD

Jim B. Tucker, M.D. is Bonner-Lowry Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences at the University of Virginia. He is continuing the work of the late Dr. Ian Stevenson at the UVA Division of Perceptual Studies with children who report memories of previous lives. A board-certified child psychiatrist, Dr. Tucker worked with Dr. Stevenson for several years before taking over the research upon Dr. Stevenson's retirement in 2002. The author of two books on past lives based upon case studies he has personally researched, Dr. Tucker is one of the world's leading authorities in that field. His two books are respectively entitled, *Life Before Life: Children's Memories of Previous Lives* (2005) and *Return to Life: Extraordinary Cases of Children Who Remember Past Lives* (2013). It is about the latter book concerning which my 12 interview questions to Dr. Tucker were directed.

*How times are beginning to change. Dr. Stevenson so cautiously chose the title of his "Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation." If he had chosen instead the word "Confirming" he could have had his M.D. license revoked, tenure revoked, and employment terminated due to the rampant wrath within the Academy against heretics challenging the materialist reductionist mind set. You too, it would seem, need to be mindful of the residual predominance of that Weltanschauung. Hence, you concluded your philosophizing in your latest book by intimating (rather than asserting) "One possibility that I hope you are now open to is the prospect of life after death that our cases of past-life memories suggest." From your perspective, what trends within the Academy, the medical profession and the public in general are you perceiving regarding past life consciousness, afterlife possibility, the incredibly broad spectrum of human consciousness, as well as the initial loosening up of what William James used to refer to as "Medical Materialism"?*

"I think Ian chose such terminology, not just for political reasons, but because being conservative in his own thinking, he judged the cases to be suggestive rather than confirming. Of course, some of them are quite suggestive, and Ian did write later that he thought that reincarnation was the best – even though not the only – explanation for the stronger cases he had investigated. It is true that Ian didn't

want to become isolated from mainstream medicine, but I don't think that was the primary motivation for his caution. And I doubt he would have had his medical license revoked if he had said his cases confirmed reincarnation. Plenty of physicians assert all kinds of crazy things, and they still keep their licenses. Keeping tenure may have been more of an issue, although John Mack kept his position at Harvard while proclaiming that his patients had been abducted by UFOs.



Tucker

"Regarding trends, I think that academia may well be less open to parapsychology now than it was fifty years ago, although I don't have firsthand perspective on fifty years ago. Countering that trend, however, are the increasing numbers of individuals

in medicine, science, and academia who are open to areas of spirituality. More emphasis has been given in recent years to respect for patients' spiritual beliefs. Consciousness-centered work is also growing, with clinical use of meditation and mindfulness on the rise."

*In your chapter "Mind Over Matter" you stated, "... consciousness is outside the quantum system, interacting with the physical universe but also existing beyond it, as it registers and creates that universe. Consciousness does not exist because the physical world does; the physical world exists because consciousness does." Generally speaking, beginning with your empirical training as a medical scientist, in intellectual terms how did you come to this conclusion and how did your past-life case studies influence the development of that perspective?*

"It pretty much takes a chapter to explain how I arrived at that conclusion, but I can summarize that I think it is the most reasonable interpretation for the findings in quantum physics. Though this is far from an accepted consensus, a physicist as renowned as Max Planck, the founder of quantum theory, said, 'I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness.' Observation seems to hold a very special place in quantum physics, and I would argue it is necessary to produce reality.

"I wouldn't say that my case studies have

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## Guest Editorial: Truth Wins

by Roberta Grimes, JD

*The kingdom of God does not come visibly, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you.*

— Jesus (LK 17:20-21).

*The universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine.*

— Physicist, Astronomer and Mathematician  
Sir James Jeans.

*First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.*

— Mahatma Gandhi

For nearly two centuries, curious people have been turning up afterlife evidence here or there and gradually accumulating a tremendous body of consistent and detailed information. By now our precious trove includes anomalies like NDEs; abundant communications from the dead; scientific insights whose importance the scientists themselves don't entirely grasp; and ancient writings that corroborate what we are learning, the teachings of Jesus first among them. *And it all fits!* The picture that develops as you keep adding pixels is a complex one, but in all my years of studying afterlife evidence I have never found anything that seemed inconsistent.



When you first realize that you have come across the greatest news in human history, you want to shout it from the rooftops. Look! Wow! But you soon realize that a phalanx of scientific and religious defenders of ignorance has long stood in the way of wide dissemination of these truths. In the nineteenth century, pioneers like William Stainton Moses and William James tried to break through to public awareness; in the twentieth century, scholars ranging from Charles Drayton Thomas to Ian Stevenson and Raymond Moody did the same. But those trying to suppress these truths were deep in employing the first two of Mahatma Gandhi's four tactics that the wrong-headed use against open-minded seekers: they ignored or ridiculed the pioneering afterlife researchers and what they had discovered.

So for nearly two centuries, a multitude of researchers has contributed pixels to the image that was being developed of the afterlife and how it works. These rugged souls lived and died in Gandhi's first and second stages of oppression of the truth. Why then does it seem now to more and more researchers that the long night of public ignorance in this field is about to end?

Here is why:

1) **At last the picture is nearly complete.** It was not until the dawn of this century that sufficient scientific information was publicly available to enable us to fit all the afterlife evidence into a scientific framework.

2) **We are told that an enlightenment process on earth is being orchestrated from the afterlife levels.** Every advancement in this field is led not by living researchers, but by their dead counterparts. We have been told that the use of atomic bombs during the Second World War was a wake-up call for our upstairs friends, and we are being enlightened now so we won't blow up the planet. Whatever the reason might be, everyone currently working in this field is aware that dead teams are collaborating with us urgently.

3) **Laypeople are becoming less rigidly beliefs-based and more interested in spirituality.** The transition in just the past decade is remarkable! You see it in the popular press, in book sales and abundant conventions, and in the sharp decline in attendance at traditional churches while the Unity movement remains the fastest-growing spiritual organization on earth.

4) **The Internet is making it impossible for mainstream science and traditional Christianity to maintain their stranglehold on afterlife-related information.** The rise of the Web over the past fifteen years coincides precisely with the growing public interest in non-religious spirituality.

5) **Big news is on the way.** Scientists working in the field of afterlife communication and their dead collaborators are in the process of establishing reliable, consistent methods by which the living can chat directly with the dead.

So, Katy bar the door! Once the Internet is feeding news that the dead are a phone call away to a freer-spirited populace led by aging Baby Boomers looking hard at their own mortality, we will pass from Gandhi's ignore and ridicule stages fairly quickly into all-out war. Traditional Christians will say that we work for the devil. Traditional scientists will battle the truth on every front. Vast ridicule will be heaped upon researchers who until now have been mostly ignored, but I know many of them and I can attest that they are used to the ridicule, and amused by it.

It will be in that moment of revelation, likely now just a few years away, that this Academy will come into its own. As a decades-old fount of disciplined information, as a scholarly source of reason and clarity, we are uniquely poised to work with our dead collaborators in helping to shape the unfolding on earth of a new age of enlightenment and understanding.

*Roberta Grimes, a lawyer, is on the Board of Directors of the Academy. She is the author of "The Fun of Dying" and of the forthcoming "The Fun of Staying in Touch."*

## President's Message: Belief in an Afterlife Gives People Hope

I love receiving feedback on my columns, so was happy to read from a new member, Bob Landro, who lives in northeastern Pennsylvania. Bob wanted to share some experiences with me and he has given permission to relate them here.

An acquaintance of his, Diana, has had a number of paranormal events since her parents passed on. One day while she was folding clothes upstairs, she heard a young child laugh. And right after that, Diana heard the downstairs piano play a song from her childhood. The song played twice. Of course, no one was at the piano. Diana was convinced that the child laughing was really her and that the song from the piano was her playing it when she was a young girl—like an audio replay of the past. Has anyone ever heard of this happening to others?



Last year, the speaker on her treadmill, which was turned off, suddenly played twenty seconds of *Pop Goes the Weasel*. This is one of the songs Diana and her father liked very much when Diana was growing up. Bob explains that he's read that it might be possible for Diana's parents to tap into Diana's etheric field to rebroadcast Diana's memories that are stored in this field and send them back to her on that day. Any thoughts on this?

Mike Tymn, our esteemed editor, reports from a 1918 non-fiction book, *Thy Son Liveth: Messages from a Soldier to his Mother* by Grace Duffie Boylan that Boylan's son Bob loved telegraphy. He couldn't wait to raise a wireless mast from the top of their home and he insisted his mother learn it with him. Looking back on this the mother states she was impressed with the synchronicities that shape our lives because telegraphy helped her hear from her son once he died.

After dismantling the telegraphy instrument due to a government order, Bob left the receiver still in his room. Bob had a premonition that one day his mother would hear from him when she visited his room. And hear from him she did!

During WWI she was up in his room reading a recent letter from him when the wireless signaled, "Attention!" She translated from Morse code and found the message to be, "Mother, be game. I am alive and loving you. But my body is with thousands of other mothers' boys near Lens. Get this fact to others if you can. It's awful for us when you grieve and we can't get in touch with you to tell you we are all right. This is a clumsy way. I'll figure out something easier. I'm confused yet. Bob." (This interesting story plus four others will be published

in a book by Mike in the near future.)

Changing the subject, one book I read to my youngest and eighth grandchild is *Heaven is for Real for Kids* (2011, Thomas Nelson Publishers). This is a story told by Colton Burpo, not quite four years old, to his parents after he had a near-death experience while very sick. (The reason Colton returned from heaven is that he realized his Daddy would be very, very sad if he didn't.) His father, Todd Burpo, a minister, wrote a book for adults in 2010 entitled *Heaven is for Real*.

My seven-year-old grandson, Duncan, delights in the fact, as your children or grandchildren may do also, that a little boy went to heaven and came back. This children's book has been made into a movie that should be in the theaters before this is in print. Duncan and I are going to be the first ones in line when it comes to New Jersey. It's a wonderful way to have children become interested in the afterlife and lessens their fears of dying. It also starts many an interesting conversation! Also, the more children we can get interested in the afterlife, the more new members we'll have in twenty years or so! (Note: I realize a religious NDE is not what most of our members believe in. However, Colton's father was a minister, so this is what Colton saw. Please remember that spiritual experiences, of which a NDE is one, are idiosyncratic to the individual and potentially available to everyone.)

As Abraham Maslow reported, all people have the capacity for encountering transcendent reality. In 1944, Dr. Carl Jung left his body and traveled to outer space where he viewed our earth. He was about to discover his purpose for this lifetime when his doctor called him back to his hospital room, where he was recovering from a heart attack. He was angry that he had to return, which seems to be the norm. Since then, Dr. Raymond E. Moody's book, *Life After Life*, published in 1975, explained characteristics of a NDE. Should we call Jung's experience a NDE or, what he called it, a vision?

Colton Burpo's NDE happened in 2003. In 2008, Dr. Eben Alexander, a Harvard trained neurosurgeon, narrowly escaped death while in a coma with a non-functioning brain. He, like Colton, saw a sister on the other side that he never knew he had. He didn't know she was his sister until he reunited with his natural parents a year or two after his NDE when they showed him a photograph of the daughter they had lost. Seeing loved ones who have died young seems to be a component of these stories that touches others. They are relieved that their loved ones are safe and in heaven. I think one of our jobs as Academy members is to accept the many stories of encounters with transcendent reality, categorize

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# Finding George Pellew

by Michael Tynn

One of the key figures in the research surrounding the mediumship of Leonora Piper of Boston, Mass. was George Pellew, referred to in the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) records, for family privacy concerns, as George Pelham, or just G.P. Shortly after his death on February 18, 1892, Pellew began communicating through Mrs. Piper's trance mediumship and convinced Dr. Richard Hodgson, the chief researcher for the ASPR, and others that they were actually in touch with spirits of the dead.

Until Pellew communicated, the researchers suspected that a "secondary personality" in Mrs. Piper's subconscious was telepathically obtaining information from the minds of sitters and feeding it back to them while pretending to be spirits of the dead. When information came through that was unknown to the sitters, they theorized that the secondary personality had the ability to tap into minds anywhere in the world or to acquire it from some "cosmic reservoir."

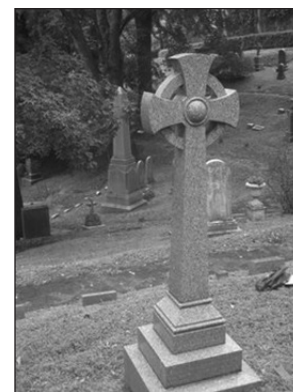
Pellew joined the ASPR after moving to New York City, apparently more out of philosophical curiosity than any desire to participate in the research. Based on some of his poems, he seems to have been afflicted with what Professor William James called "soul sickness," a common malady of the day resulting from the "God is dead" philosophy that came in the wake of Darwinism. Hodgson recalled having had several long philosophical discussions about the possibility of a "future life" with Pellew before his death, and Pellew telling him that he could not conceive of an afterlife. However, he was open-minded on the subject and told Hodgson that if he should die before Hodgson and found himself "still existing," he would attempt to let Hodgson know.

Pellew died at the age of 31, as a result of falling down a flight of stairs at his Manhattan apartment. He began communicating on March 22, 1892. There was simply too much individuality, too much purpose and persistence, expressed by Pellew to attribute it to telepathy of a limited or expanded nature. It was one thing for a medium to tap into another mind or cosmic reservoir for information, quite another for that other mind or reservoir to come back with the fullness of a personality rather

than just fragmentary bits of information. Moreover, Hodgson noted that during the time Pellew communicated, he (Hodgson) brought 150 sitters, 30 of whom were known to Pellew when he was alive. In each case, except one, Pellew greeted them by name. The non-recognition of the other 120 was contrary to the telepathic and cosmic soul theories. That is, if Mrs. Piper's secondary personality had been reading minds or searching in some cosmic computer, she/he would have known the names of all of them. (The one he did not recognize was a young girl when he knew her and a grown woman at the time of the sitting.)

In doing research for my 2013 book, *Resurrecting Leonora Piper*, I was unable to find a single photo of Pellew and only sketchy biographical information. However, after the book was published, I stumbled upon a lengthy obituary in an obscure place, including a photo of him, while a curious reader of the book, Bruno Molon, tracked down Pellew's grave at Oak Hill Cemetery, plot 48 east, Washington, D.C.

Born in the Isle of Wight, Pellew was the son of Henry Pellew, one of the founders of Keble College, Oxford and the grandson of George Pellew, Dean of Norwich, England. His mother, an American, was the granddaughter of John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States. After his mother died, his father married her sister and moved to the United States in 1873, when young George was 13.



Pellew's gravesite

Pellew graduated from Harvard, where he was the editor of the *Harvard Advocate*, in 1880, obtained his master's and law degrees there, then practiced law, apparently unsuccessfully, for several years before turning to writing. He authored *Castle and Cabin*, about social and economic conditions in Ireland, and biographies of John Jay and Henry Addington, as well as a book of poetry. Before moving to New York City four years before his death, he worked as a journalist for the *Boston Journal*. At the time of his death, he was employed as an editorial writer for the *New York Sun*.

*George, I suspect that you are now at too high a vibration to receive this message, but, if you do get it, thank you for all your efforts in bringing us evidence of survival. It may very well be the best evidence ever. If I can ever catch up with you, I'll thank you personally.*



G.P.



**The Source Field Investigations (The Hidden Science and Lost Civilizations Behind the 2012 Prophecies)** by David Wilcock, Dutton, Published by Penguin Group (USA) Inc. New York, NY, 2011, 536 pages, available from \$10.41 in hardcover on Amazon.com

David Wilcock has produced a remarkable compilation of research (46 pages of footnotes) that provides numerous scientific explanations for what has normally been considered as paranormal events. Not only has he provided clear explanations, he has also updated scientific knowledge to the extent that the physics I learned in high school is no longer relevant. Einstein's "unified field" does exist.

He begins with a Western scientist, Dr. Cleve Backster, who is an expert in hypnotism and the polygraph. He had worked on the polygraph for over 18 years when his secretary gave him a plant as a gift and he thought it would be interesting to see what would happen if he connected it to the polygraph. As a child, I remember being told that plants should be talked to so they would grow better. No one ever gave an explanation as to how that was possible, as no one knew. Dr. Backster connected the plant to the polygraph and was surprised to see a reading that was not smooth, it was jagged – alive. He then dipped one of the leaves in hot coffee – no response. Then he tapped a leaf with his pen – no response. This activity went on for 14 minutes when Dr. Backster had a thought – he would get a match and burn the plant's electroded leaf. At that moment, he was standing 15 feet from the plant and the history of science changed forever – the polygraph recording pen moved rapidly to the top of the chart. The plant reacted to Backster's thoughts. This happened in 1966 and I don't recall this becoming earth shattering news.

Apparently there is a connection between our thoughts (not only our words) and plants. This was the first of numerous scientific breakthroughs spread throughout the book. The truly sad part of these revelations is the efforts that have been enacted successfully to keep much of these new developments from reaching the public.

Mr. Wilcock did not limit his research to only the Western scientific community. He has uncovered some fascinating achievements made by Russian scientists (you won't believe what they uncovered

from "Pyramid Power" and DNA transformations). The DNA changes prove that evolution could be totally spontaneous by nothing more than rearranging DNA molecules within an existing species. Sorry Darwin, but there is no missing link.

The first half of the book relates to the human body and mind (our consciousness). The second half relates to our environment: time and space. Did you know that the flow of time can be changed?

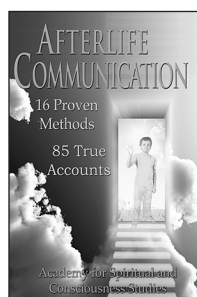
One of the more interesting revelations concerned Dr. Robert Jahn, who started the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) laboratory in 1979. Its purpose was to study whether sensitive electronic devices might be affected by special states of consciousness, including strong emotions and directed intentions. Thus began the Global Consciousness Project with Dr. Roger Nelson. Their efforts at measuring "group consciousness" centered on being able to change the numbers that came out of computers and create "patterns in chaos." Their results were successful.

They also spent almost 20 years in developing what is called a "mind-lamp." It contains an ultrasensitive LED which changes colors based on human emotion. If plants can read our minds from a distance, why can't a small machine? I've seen such a lamp and made it change color by my own thoughts in a matter of a few seconds. This information is not in Mr. Wilcock's book.

I would say that one of the most amazing revelations concerns gravity and how its flow can be changed and result in levitation, which would enable the construction of the pyramids, as well as flight.

Whether it's DNA changes, consciousness connections, gravity flows, time slips, or vortex phenomena, there is one thing that literally covers them all – the Source Field. All of the technical explanations offered by Mr. Wilcock are to support his belief that 2012 marks the beginning of a new Golden Age for mankind.

– Paul J. Hauser, JD



### Volunteers Sought for

#### Treasurer & Web Master Positions

At the Academy's July conference, the Board will be filling the positions of Treasurer and Web Master of *Spirituality Matters*, both volunteer positions now held by Karin Nemri. Any member who feels qualified to fill either position is asked to contact Karen Herrick at [karen@karenherick.com](mailto:karen@karenherick.com)



## Dr. Penny Sartori discusses NDE Research

by Howard A. Jones, Ph.D.

What we now describe as near-death experiences have been recounted in classical literature for over 2000 years. Perhaps the oldest story in western literature, which includes resurrection as well, is to be found in Plato's dialogue *Republic* where he relates the story of Er. The whole of Dante's *Divine Comedy* is also an account of a real or imagined near-death experience of a subject passing through stages of torment (*Inferno*), learning and reconditioning (*Purgatorio*) and bliss (*Paradiso*) – the stages through which the discarnate soul is said to pass in Catholic belief. The term 'near-death experience' (NDE) was created by Dr Raymond Moody in his 1975 book *Life After Life*.

Dr. Penny Sartori made a detailed study of NDEs for her Ph.D. thesis. In 1997, she began the UK's first long term prospective study of NDEs under the supervisions of Professor Paul Badham and Dr. Peter Fenwick. In 2005 she was awarded a Ph.D. for her research by the University of Wales, Lampeter\*. A summary of her NDE work with other accounts arising from her research over the years was published commercially in 2014 by Watkins Publishing, London, as a book entitled *The Wisdom of Near-Death Experiences: How Understanding NDEs can Help us Live More Fully*. The book has a foreword by Dr. Pim van Lommel.

I have known Penny for several years now through our work for the Alister Hardy Society (now the AHSSSE) in South Wales. I recently put some questions to Penny about her work.

**Can you tell us something about your background?**

"I was born in Swansea and began my nurse training at Morriston Hospital in 1989. After qualifying as a staff nurse I worked at various different departments but loved ITU and remained there for 17 years. In 2011, I made the difficult decision to leave nursing and now I teach on the part-time degree at Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education."

**Why did you decide to investigate NDEs?**

"I'm not a medical doctor. I worked as an intensive care nurse for 17 years (after working at various other departments – I just loved ITU). I did a Ph.D. in NDEs as a result of an encounter while looking after a dying patient. He had a prolonged death which really made me think about death and

how little we understand about the dying process."

**Does your family – parents, siblings – have any interest in or connection with either medicine or psychic or spiritual phenomena?**

"No; my family doesn't have any interest at all in any of the above. My family is not even religious and we never regularly attended church when I was growing up."

**Did you believe they existed before you started or did you embark on the study as a true sceptic?**

"I'd never really thought about spiritual issues. My grandfather went to see a spiritual healer when he was diagnosed with a brain tumour and I really gave him a hard time about this because I was a student nurse at the time and was very scientific in my thinking and I really wanted him to have all of the medical treatment available and not bother with things that I didn't understand. The first time a patient told me about an NDE was when I was a student nurse. Although I listened to the lady I didn't for one minute think it was anything other than an hallucination or that she'd been given too much diamorphine. I listened but didn't *hear* what she was saying as I had failed to engage with her properly because of my pre-conceived ideas at the time."

**How has your study changed your own perception of NDEs?**

"By thoroughly engaging with both the NDE literature as well as with my patients and other people who have described their NDE it has given me a great insight into what these people have actually experienced on a subjective level. It is one thing to read about NDEs but quite something else to fully engage with those who report the experience."

**What do you think are the most convincing qualities of NDEs that demonstrate the validity of the afterlife?**

"I don't think NDEs offer any validity of an afterlife. They can't tell us anything about an afterlife as these experiences occur in the time leading up to death – what happens beyond that will remain a mystery until we experience it fully when we die. However, my research and the research of others have called into question what consciousness is. Whereas it is the current scientific belief that consciousness is created by the brain, I no longer believe this to be true. There is no scientific evidence as to how consciousness arises from the brain. In light of NDE research it makes far more sense to explore consciousness as being mediated through the brain,

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Penny Sartori

# NDEs:

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as opposed to being created by it. So I think we are making new discoveries about consciousness which need to be expanded upon and explored further as opposed to being denied and explained away, as has been the case until recent years, simply because they do not fit in with the premise that consciousness is created by the brain."

### *How if at all have the lives of your patients been influenced by their experience?*

"It was difficult to follow-up all of the patients in the study for various different reasons. In the cases where I was able to follow-up, the patients there did seem to have positive changes, especially with coping with some of life's sad moments, such as the death of a loved one. I also have a large database of NDE cases from people who have contacted me over the years and many of these people report very positive changes, such as a renewed vigour for life, greater appreciation of what they have in life, they become less materialistic and they may even make career changes. Some even go into the caring profession or undertake voluntary work. Their actions after the NDE tend to fully support their renewed zest for life. There have also been some not so pleasant changes because they have not been able to fully understand their experience or feel isolated because there is no one who can understand what they have been through and experienced. It can take many years to fully integrate the experience into their life, which is why I believe we need to be more aware of all aspects of NDEs."

### *Do you think NDE research has reached a point of diminishing returns?*

"No; I think there is far more NDE research that needs to be undertaken. The research undertaken so far is literally only scratching the surface and is raising more questions than it is answering."

### *Can further research uncover anything that hasn't already been uncovered?*

"Yes, absolutely; further research will allow greater exploration of the possibility that consciousness is primary and is mediated through the brain as opposed to being created by the brain. There were also many questions raised during my research that I'd also like to explore further, such as how could Patient 10 report such a heightened state of awareness and report events viewed from an out-of-body perspective which were accurate and occurred while he was deeply unconscious and his brain was severely physiologically inhibited. It just doesn't make sense if consciousness is produced by the brain."

### *Does the public's familiarity with the subject now prejudice further research?*

"This is a good question and, yes, there may be some influence and some form of expectation with regards to future research. This is one reason why I think it would be best if NDE research is kept as low key as possible until the research has been completed."



### *What direction could further research take?*

"I think more hospital-based studies are important because this provides the easiest way of verifying details reported by patients. However, this research would be more effective if conducted by small teams of researchers who are present in the clinical area as much as possible, so that interviews can be conducted as close to the NDE occurring as possible. Nurses in particular are ideal candidates to conduct this research as they are present in the clinical area and, because of the amount of time they spend with patients, the patients tend to share experiences with nurses very easily. It would also be very useful to have a team of people that include both those with some experience of NDEs as well as those who are sceptical."

### *The eminent scientist Michael Marsh wrote what he considered to be a scathing condemnation of NDEs. As we have agreed, the arguments he advanced were in fact fundamentally flawed. To what extent does the continuing opposition of materialist scientists damage belief in NDEs and indeed trust in the validity of psychic experiences and the afterlife generally?*

"I think it is good to get a balanced perspective on NDEs, but it is also important to do this by having a thorough understanding of exactly what NDEs are. Many people have taken NDEs at surface value and haven't been able to fully engage with the wide range of aspects that this highly complex phenomenon encompasses. Again, I don't think NDEs provide validity of an afterlife but they certainly call into question our understanding of consciousness. Also, by trying to pathologize NDEs we are just going around in the same old circular arguments and not exploring further possibilities: we are missing the very important message that NDEs can give us for life and living this life."

\* Penny's Ph.D. thesis was published in 2008 by Edwin Mellen Press of Lewiston, NY, as a book entitled *The Near-Death Experiences of Hospitalized Intensive Care Patients: A Five-year Clinical Study*.



# TUCKER:

## From page 1

influenced my development of that perspective, but instead, that perspective has strengthened my confidence in the cases. I don't think we can map the cases, if they're valid, onto a materialist understanding of reality, but if consciousness is indeed an entity separate from the physical, then I see no reason why an individual consciousness would end when the physical brain dies. In the cases we study, it appears to have continued on and become attached to another brain."

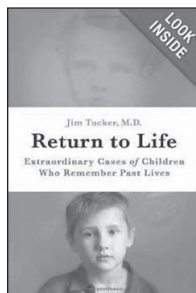
*The realization or recollection of having lived a past life can come spontaneously as a child (such as in the cases of the children you have studied), from a regression induced by hypnosis or guided visualization, from a later-in-life extrasensory perception, among other possibilities. The small children with past-life memories whose past-life families are still living or otherwise easily traceable quite clearly produce the most persuasive evidence of the existence of past-lives. That is undoubtedly a major reason why Dr. Stevenson and you went down that trail. Do you envision that with the increasing recognition of the reality of past lives, scholarly investigations into past-lives will receive more support – including funding support – within the academic community and within the general public? And if so, will past life studies involving adults become more common?*

"I can't predict future funding support, but at this point, I don't think we have a reliable way of accessing past-life memories that do not occur spontaneously. In adults, hypnotic regression for events of the current life can produce some remarkable hits, but also a lot of misses as the mind fills in the blanks with fantasy material. Hypnosis with the expectation of recalling a past life typically does produce material, but whether the subject experiences memories of an actual past life is usually questionable and sometimes clearly not the case. Recollections from a past life through hypnotic regression can occasionally be verifiable and quite impressive, but not frequently enough, I would guess, to generate a lot of interest in the academic community. I think it's possible that in the future we will develop better means of accessing such memories through new techniques, and those might gain more support."

*Some children who recall their past lives, such as did Ryan in one of your case studies, develop or discover psychic (or ESP) abilities later in life. (The same could be said of some long-term meditators.) In your opinion, do past-life memories trigger such expansions of consciousness, or is a capacity for expanded (i.e., extrasensory) consciousness the likely cause of past-life memories? What important dimensions*

*remain to be learned about such capacities?*

"Most children who report past-life memories do not have any apparent psychic abilities, but for those who do, I doubt the memories lead to the abilities. Instead, I imagine they can travel together. I think it's fair to say that most children with past-life memories aren't psychic, and most psychics don't have past-life memories. Even so, the overlap is probably more than would be expected by chance. It's possible that some psychics may share some personality traits, such as greater transliminality, that young children tend to have."



*Developmentally speaking, how do children you have studied who remember their past lives fare as adults as a result of whether their parents strongly disbelieved and asserted that such memories were pure fantasy compared to parents who came to support, appreciate and praise their children who insisted upon the reality of their past-life memories?*

"We haven't specifically looked at the question of how these parents' reactions affect their children's development. I suspect they are probably typical of their parenting in general, so being at least open to what their children are saying vs. being dismissive would be only one example of their general parenting style that would influence their children's development."

"In general, the children seem to turn out just fine. Erlendur Haraldsson has interviewed adults who were subjects of cases when they were children, and on the whole, they were doing well."

*Dr. Stevenson and you have done a significant amount of research on birthmarks evidencing past-life wounds. One example you presented involved Patrick, the "comeback kid" who was born with birthmarks in the same location as his deceased half-brother Kevin. Have any DNA studies been done yet regarding such cases? If not, what potential do you see in future possible DNA testing?*

"Though a lot of people have asked about DNA testing, none has been done, and I don't know that it holds a lot of potential. Most birthmarks have no genetic basis that I'm aware of. Beyond that, I wouldn't necessarily expect the DNA of the subject and the previous person to show any similarities. If a consciousness from the previous person does have an effect on the physical development of the fetus, I would guess it would be epigenetic—affecting how genes are expressed—rather than changing the actual genes themselves."

**See DNA page 9**



# DNA:

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*You also stated that you have discovered that there have been scarring patterns in animals that are reflected in birthmarks of humans. What investigations or speculations have you given to this topic and is the transmigration of souls one possibility you have considered?*

"Well, I mentioned a single claim by a woman who said that after she made a mark on the leg of a deceased dog, a child with a similar birthmark was born into the family that owned it. We rarely get reports of children's memories of past lives as animals, but we do get a few. Though those memories tend to be completely unverifiable, in some of the cases, the children also had memories of another human life that were in fact verified. I would speculate that if we do survive after death, we tend to have a next life that is fairly similar to the last one. That would make a life as another species quite unusual but not necessarily impossible."

*Your Chapter 7, "Identity Unknown," pertains to instances in which a person's recollection of a past life could not be traced to a specific individual, but visits to the place in which the past life was apparently lived resulted in recognition of buildings and other local features. How do you explain these partial, but incomplete memories, and what is the utility of pursuing such cases in so far as benefits to the subject of the study is concerned?*

"In the cases in that chapter, the children didn't remember enough specifics to enable one deceased individual matching their memories to be identified, and we have hundreds of such cases. Past-life memories are never complete. Instead, many of the children seem to have glimpses of memory, just as most of us do for events in our childhoods. If they don't include specific names that can be checked, the cases usually remain unverified, but they are still examples of this phenomenon that occurs in this country and all over the world. Because of that, it's useful to include these children when considering who has these experiences and when examining the patterns in the cases."

*Dr. Michael Newton in his "Journey of Souls" stated: "A curious phenomenon about the spirit world is that important people in our lives are always able to greet us, even though they may already be living another life in a new body..." Regarding your case study involving Kevin becoming Patrick, in your opinion could Kevin's soul consciousness have been in existence in the afterlife realm simultaneously with its apparent existence in his successor half-brother Patrick's consciousness?*

"All any of us can do is speculate, but I suspect that if we do in fact experience multiple lives,

the process is not as linear as we might think. The consciousness that survives would in some sense transcend space-time, so I also think it would be possible to meet a deceased relative after we die while 'at the same time' that individual is continuing on in a new life in this world."

*What kind of future do you see for both past and between lives regressions and do you envision that any of your future past-life research will entail such regressions?*

"Ian Stevenson was quite skeptical about hypnotic regression, and as I mentioned earlier, I am, too. Despite the occasional impressive case, I don't expect for us to do any work with it here."

*Regarding the nature of the afterlife – in addition to past-life and between-lives regressions – what useful information, if any, have you gleaned from mediumistic accounts of afterlife realities?*

"That's a complicated area, because mediumship is a complicated area. The best mediums have clearly had paranormal access to information, but whether their interactions with the dead can be accepted at face value is another question. It may well be that the medium's unconscious colors the experience, so I'm not sure we can necessarily accept the reports of the afterlife environment as being literally true. They are interesting nonetheless, and many of them include a space-time existence not unlike our own. In my book, I give a quote by C. Drayton Thomas that is purportedly from his deceased wife, who notes with surprise how individuals and objects are as solid in the afterlife world as they are in this one. That makes sense to me, because for events to occur, for things to happen, it seems to me that some sort of space-time world is necessary."

*Looking ahead for a decade or so how do you envision the growth of consciousness studies including past lives, between lives, the diversity of altered states of consciousness, extrasensory perception and other related subject matter contributing to our identity as human beings and the meaningfulness of our lives?*

"For people who are open to such material, I think there will continue to be substantial work indicating that we are more than just our physical bodies, that there is a consciousness component that should be considered separate from them. I hope that awareness can lead to a sense of greater meaning and a more optimistic view of life. I don't know that the form of the work will change significantly in the next decade, but I suspect more and more people will explore these areas, if not through formal research, then at least in an individual, experiential way."

## Dr. Hodgson's NDE as reported from the Spirit World

Representing the American Society for Psychical Research, Dr. Richard Hodgson studied the mediumship of Leonora Piper of Boston, Mass. for some 18 years before his death, at age 50, on December 20, 1905. Eight days later, he began communicating through Mrs. Piper, although it took several months for him to communicate effectively.

Mrs. R. Bergman, a personal friend of Hodgson's, sat with Mrs. Piper on December 31, 1907 and again on January 1, 1908. In the first sitting, the communication was in writing and there was difficulty in reading them. In the second sitting, the voice was used and things went more smoothly. The below extracts are from the second sitting. Hodgson related what seems to have been a near-death experience, although not so named at the time.

**Hodgson:** "Do you remember my description of luminiferous ether, and of my conception of what this life was like? I have found it was not an



*Dr. Richard Hodgson*

erroneous imagination." [Mrs. Bergman recalled the discussion with Hodgson.]

**Hodgson:** "I remember telling you about my dismounting and sitting and drinking in the beauty of the morning."

**Bergman:** "Tell me any experiences that befell you while riding."

**Hodgson:** "Oh, I told you about the experience with the fiery horse. You remember he dismounted me. It was the first experience I had in seeing stars. I lost consciousness. I experienced passing into this life. I remember my being unconscious and recovering consciousness. I remember telling you about this at the hotel."

Mrs. Bergman recalled how Hodgson had related this very experience to her at the Parker House in Boston in 1904. She remembered that Hodgson spoke of being in a "spiritual universe" during the time he was unconscious.

**Hodgson:** "When I found the light (Mrs. Piper), it looked like a tremendous window, open window. The canopy – do you remember how they used to talk about the canopy? It is an ethereal veil. If your spiritual eyes were open you could see through this veil and see me talking to you perfectly."

Mrs. Bergman also recalled Hodgson discussing the "canopy" with her when he was alive.

Professor William James concluded that this was a very evidential sitting. "It is improbable that such unimportant conversations should have been reported by the living R.H. to Mrs. Piper, either awake or when in trance with other sitters; and to my mind the only plausible explanation is supernormal. Either it spells 'spirit return,' or telepathic reading of the sitter's mind by the medium in trance."

—MET

### Book Review Editor Position Open

The Academy is looking for a volunteer to fill the position of Book Review Editor. The BRE is responsible for making sure that books of possible interest to members are reviewed or otherwise noted in the Journal. The objective is to have a minimum of five and a maximum of eight reviews each quarter.

Publishers and authors often send notices of new releases to the Academy with offers to send a review copy. The BRE responds to such notices. If she or he does not want to review the book, it is the responsibility of the BRE to e-mail the members of the Publications Committee or other Academy members to solicit a reviewer.

The BRE might also write a quarterly feature for *The Searchlight* discussing books of possible interest to Academy members or featuring one particular book.

Interested members should e-mail Michael Tymn at metgat@aol.com and Paul Hauser at paulhauser@gmail.com

### Ponder on This

"...multiple lines of hard evidence show that mental events do exist and can significantly influence the functioning of our brains and bodies. They also show that our minds can affect events occurring outside the confines of our bodies, and that we can access consciously transcendent realms – even when the brain is apparently not functioning. Most important, these various lines of evidence indicate that materialist theories of the mind are erroneous; we are not merely complex biological machines, computers made of meat. Reality is a vastly complex territory that we are only beginning to explore. It encompasses, as you will see in the chapters that follow, much more than the physical world.

"Times are changing quickly, particularly in science. The most exciting frontiers of twenty-first century science – quantum mechanics, cloud computing, virtual reality – show us very different models of what is real and what is possible than materialist science permits."

—Mario Beauregard, Ph.D.  
from his 2012 book *Brain Wars*



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## PRESIDENT:

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them, and perhaps create a continuum line for them. People need these stories validated.

Going to the other spectrum of older age in our society, I was recently interviewed at Seabrook, a senior living facility, for their television program. The interview was entitled *Is There a Heaven?* and worked off the statistics that if approximately 70 percent of our population believes in heaven and angels, why don't people discuss dying more and why aren't they curious in these discussions as to what happens when they do pass over? If you are interested in viewing, please go to <http://youtube.com/FX9BV3pn7MU> on line. Or go to YouTube and type in "Karen Herrick and Spiritual Psychology."

Carl Jung wrote, "The psyche, in its deepest reaches, participates in a form of existence beyond space and time, and, thus partakes of what is inadequately and symbolically described as *eternity*." Jung and Einstein had dinner on several occasions in the early days of Einstein's work on relativity. Einstein's physics influenced his thinking about categories of the mind. "The feeling of immortality, it seems to me, has its origin in a peculiar feeling of extension in space and time," he wrote. This statement, in particular, explains so much to me about the stories above.

Please send me your comments at [Karen@karenherrick.com](mailto:Karen@karenherrick.com). We all learn more from sharing our stories, and that is what the Academy is all about.

— Karen E. Herrick, Ph.D.

### New Members

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The mission of The Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies, Inc. is to discern, develop and disseminate knowledge of how consciousness studies and paranormal phenomena may relate to and enhance the development of the human spirit.

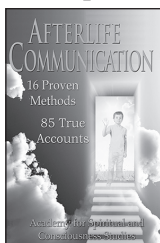
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## Afterlife Communication Book

The new book, *Afterlife Communication: 19 Proven Methods, 85 True Accounts*, contains descriptions of methods people are using today to communicate with loved ones who have passed away and true accounts of communication using the methods. The book's authors are the presenters at the Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies' 38<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, July 11-13, 2014. The conference topic is New Developments in Afterlife Communications. These are the authors:

- Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D., describing the soul phone that people in the afterlife manipulate to indicate their presence
- Rochelle Wright, M.S., demonstrating the Guided Afterlife Connections psychotherapy technique that enables clients to connect with loved ones for whom they are grieving
- R. Craig Hogan, Ph.D., explaining the Web-based Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure hundreds have used to connect with loved ones on the other side
- Maria Pe, J.D., on meditation techniques that con-



nect her with her two sons in the afterlife

- Victor Zammit, Ph.D., describing observable manifestations by physical mediums today
- Sonia Rinaldi, M.S., explaining how to record people from the afterlife speaking over the phone
- Mark Ireland describing methods he uses to communicate with his son in the afterlife
- Suzanne Giesemann, M.A., explaining evidence that mediums are connecting with loved ones
- Rosemary Ellen Guiley, describing how to connect with the afterlife in dreams and mirror gazing
- Bruce Moen, explaining the Monroe Institute's techniques used to rescue lost souls in the afterlife
- Irma Slage, teaching participants how to use automatic writing to communicate with loved ones
- Carol Morgan, describing how she uses a pendulum to communicate with her son in spirit
- Joe Higgins, describing how we can know when loved ones are contacting us in our daily lives
- Herb Puryear, Ph.D., and Anne Puryear, D.D., explaining how to set up a threshold room that enhances afterlife connections
- Susanne Wilson, M.A., describing her meditation technique that people individually and in groups use to connect with loved ones who have passed away